
Employment Land Review

Update – April 2011

Wyre Forest District Council

Executive Summary

In order to assist the preparation of the Local Development Framework, and the site specific Development Plan Documents that are currently being prepared; the Council has updated its Employment Land Review, which was last produced in 2007-2008.

This study provides an update on the existing situation with regard to planning for employment land and economic development within the District, following the adoption of the Council's Core Strategy. It also includes an updated review of the policy context identifying key drivers at national, regional and local level, specifically the publication of PPS4, which post dates the original study.

The key rationale behind the update is to ensure that a refreshed look at the sites is undertaken prior to the allocation of land through the Development Plan process, taking into account the slight shift in policy.

There have been a number of changes regarding a few of the sites since the first Employment Land Review was undertaken. However, a large number of the sites that were analysed in the previous review still retained the same recommendations.

This study is not split into three stages like the previous Review; instead the document is as one, with the second stage of the review not being re-assessed. This is because the second stage of the previous review was primarily based around need for new floorspace and forecasting; given the long time frame in which forecasting is done, taking into account economic cycles, it was considered inappropriate to revisit this exercise so soon after it had been completed. Furthermore, the target for new employment development is now set in the Council's Adopted Core Strategy and must be adhered to.

This review, therefore, focuses on the sites that are needed to meet the 44 hectares of land, as required by the Adopted Core Strategy. The review also looks at the existing employment stock, updating the recommendations for retention of important areas of land and ensuring that appropriate sites are safeguarded from alternative uses, where appropriate.

Introduction

The future of employment and economic development is one of the key elements of how Wyre Forest District develops over the coming years. An industrial legacy within the main urban area of Kidderminster has led to a proliferation of employment sites throughout the District. In determining the future development of the District, these sites need to be considered holistically and their future development, protection or release for alternative uses determined through the Local Development Framework.

For both housing and employment uses, national planning policy expects local planning authorities to maintain a flexible and responsive supply of land. A balancing act is therefore required to ensure that sites are safeguarded or released as appropriate, whilst being mindful on the importance of ensuring that sites are deliverable.

An element of this work has already been carried out and completed through work on the Council's Core Strategy, which identified the quantum of land required to be developed over the time period of the plan. The policies and levels of development identified within the Core Strategy were informed by a comprehensive Employment Land Review, undertaken in 3 stages in 2007 and 2008.

This refreshed study provides an update to the previous ELR identifying changes that have occurred since the original study was undertaken. It also provides an update on the site specific analysis to ensure that the recommendations remain valid and are appropriate to provide the necessary balanced portfolio of sites required to meet the identified need as set in the Core Strategy.

This update is split into three main sections:

Section 1: Policy Review

There have been a number of changes in planning policy since the production of the first ELR and these have been picked up and identified in this section. The major changes in policy terms are the publication of National Policy in the shape of PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development and the Adoption of the District Council's Core Strategy. Furthermore, the effect of the planned revocation of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy is also an element of policy that is considered in this section.

Section 2: Update on Economic Development within Wyre Forest District

This element of the review provides an update on the economic well-being of the District. This section also identifies changes that have occurred with regards to sites since the publication of the first ELR which takes into account the changes to the employment landscape in terms of what completions and commitments have happened since 2006 (which is the start date of the LDF)

Section 3: Site Analysis and Recommendations

The final section provides an updated review of each of the sites included within the first ELR and identifies the major changes that have occurred over time. This section also details recommendations for the allocations document in terms of which sites could be considered for alternative uses and which are required to be safeguarded, taking into account the slight shift in policy provided in PPS.4 and reflecting the recent adoption of the Wyre Forest Core Strategy.

SECTION 1: POLICY REVIEW

The following section provides an update to the planning policy which drives decisions at the local level and provides the framework for considering new economic development within the District.

National Policy

PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development

PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development was published in December 2009 which post-dated the production of the District Council's Employment Land Review. A number of the rationales that underpinned the previous ELR still remain pertinent within the 'new' PPS.

The main elements of the PPS, which relate to the issue of Employment Land, are as follows:

Policy EC1: Using Evidence to Plan Positively

"local planning authorities should:

- a. work together with county and unitary authorities preparing local economic assessments to prepare and maintain a robust evidence base to understand both existing business needs and likely changes in the market. Annex C sets out a range of data that will be relevant to preparation of the evidence base*
- b. ensure that the volume and detail of the evidence they gather is proportionate to the importance of the issue*

At the local level, the evidence base should:

- a. be informed by regional assessments.*
- b. assess the detailed need for land or floorspace for economic development, including for all main town centre uses over the plan period*
- c. identify any deficiencies in the provision of local convenience shopping and other facilities which serve people's day-to-day needs*
- d. assess the existing and future supply of land available for economic development, ensuring that existing site allocations for economic development are reassessed against the policies in this PPS, particularly if they are for single or restricted uses. Where possible, any reviews of land available for economic development should be undertaken at the same time as, or combined with, strategic housing land availability assessments*

PPS4 reaffirms the commitment to ensure a robust evidence base is provided to inform planning decisions. Key in this is assessing the existing and future supply of land for economic development, which was undertaken through the Employment Land Review. This paper will provide an update on the current situation assessing the future supply of land available for economic development. Furthermore, the recommendations and assessment of sites will feed into the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

Policy EC2: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth

local planning authorities should ensure that their development plan:

- a. sets out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth identifying priority areas with high levels of deprivation that should be prioritised for regeneration investment, having regard to the character of the area and the need for a high quality environment*
- b. supports existing business sectors, taking account of whether they are expanding or contracting and, where possible, identifies and plans for new or emerging sectors likely to locate in their area, such as those producing low carbon goods or services. However, policies should be flexible enough to accommodate sectors not anticipated in the plan and allow a quick response to changes in economic circumstances*
- c. positively plans for the location, promotion and expansion of clusters or networks of knowledge driven or high technology industries. The regional level should set criteria for, or identify the general locations of strategic sites, ensuring that major greenfield sites are not released unnecessarily through competition between local authority areas*
- d. seeks to make the most efficient and effective use of land ,prioritising previously developed land which is suitable for re-use and, subject to the specific policy requirements of this PPS for town centres, reflects the different location requirements of businesses, such as the size of site required, site quality, access and proximity to markets, as well as the locally available workforce*
- e. identifies, protects and promotes key distribution networks, and locates or co-locates developments which generate substantial transport movements in locations that are accessible (including by rail and water transport where feasible),avoiding congestion and preserving local amenity as far as possible*
- f. plans for the delivery of the sustainable transport and other infrastructure needed to support their planned economic development and, where necessary, provides advice on phasing and programming of development*
- g. at the regional level, disaggregates minimum job targets to local authority level*
- h. at the local level, where necessary to safeguard land from other uses ,identifies a range of sites, to facilitate a broad range of economic development, including mixed use. Existing site allocations should not be carried forward from one version of the development plan to the next without evidence of the need and reasonable prospect of their take up during the plan period. If there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated economic use, the allocation should not be retained, and wider economic uses or alternative uses should be considered*
- i. at the local level, encourages new uses for vacant or derelict buildings, including historic buildings*

j. At the local level, considers how sites for different business types can be delivered, including by the use of compulsory purchase to assemble sites and other planning tools including area action plans, simplified planning zones and local development orders

k. facilitates new working practices such as live/work

A large number of these elements have already been carried out through the production of the first ELR and through the subsequent adoption of the Core Strategy. In terms of criteria a, b & c, the Core Strategy sets out a clear vision and strategy, as well as providing positive policies for the District, which encourages sustainable economic growth and identifies priority areas. This work will continue to be developed through the site specific Development Plan Documents, targeting areas in need and building on the framework included within the Core Strategy.

The Core Strategy also conforms to criteria d, and seeks to maximise the opportunity within the District for the recycling of previously developed land.

A key element of conforming to criteria h is to identify a range of sites to facilitate a broad range of economic development, and this criteria also identifies that site allocations should not be carried forward from one version of the development plan to the next without evidence of need and reasonable prospect of their take up during the plan period. This was the key rationale for the production of the Employment Land Review and provides the driver for this update – which will inform the Site Allocations process.

Policy EC6: Planning for Economic Development in Rural Areas

Local planning authorities should ensure that the countryside is protected for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, the wealth of its natural resources and to ensure it may be enjoyed by all.

In rural areas, local planning authorities should:

- a. strictly control economic development in open countryside away from existing settlements, or outside areas allocated for development in development plans*
- b. identify local service centres (which might be a country town, a single large village or group of villages) and locate most new development in or on the edge of existing settlements where employment, housing (including affordable housing), services and other facilities can be provided close together*

Due to the semi-rural nature of the Wyre Forest District, it is vital that the rural economy is considered in line with national objectives, as identified above. The Core Strategy, through Policy DS04: Rural Regeneration provides a positive platform for considering rural economic development. Further guidance for development within rural areas will be provided through the Site Allocations process.

Annex C

Annex C of PPS4 provides a range of economic and social information that can be used in establishing a robust evidence base for development plans. A large part of this evidence was collected to inform the preparation of the Core Strategy. The areas considered pertinent to employment land are as follows:

- Assessment of employment by broad sector
- Assessment of the population and workforce in terms of: qualifications, occupations, earnings, house affordability, population change
- Assessment of employment patterns and economic activity rates
- Assessment of business size
- Assessment of VAT registrations and de-registrations
- Assessment of Gross Value Added
- Assessment of existing floorspace
- Assessment of land property markets

A number of these criteria, plus other sources of economic health have been collated and updated in Section 2 of this report. This enables an insight into how the District is currently performing and provides indicators of relative areas of strength and also of weakness.

Definition of Economic Development

One of the shifts in policy framework introduced by PPS4 was a slight change in the definition of 'economic development'. Traditionally, employment development has been focussed on the use classes that fall under B1, B2 and B8 of the use classes order. However, PPS4 provided a new definition of economic development which was as follows:

Development within the B use classes, public and community uses and main town centre uses. The policies also apply to other development which achieves at least one of the following objectives:

1. *provides employment opportunities*
2. *generates wealth, or*
3. *produces or generates an economic output or product*

It is under this framework, therefore, that the suitability for different economic uses of sites needs to be considered. This provides a 'step change' away from the focus on traditional B1, B2 and B8 uses to a more flexible approach to considering economic development in a wider sense. However, PPS4 still identifies that economic development falling under 'main town centre uses' will need to follow a sequential approach. Therefore, any development needs to be understood in the context of the enhancement and protection of centres and the impacts arising from any new development proposals.

Regional Policy

Since the production of the first Employment Land Review a change in National Government has occurred. One of the main changes for the planning system is that the new administration plan to revoke the regional tier of planning meaning that the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy will not form part of the statutory Development Plan of the District in the future.

Despite the fact that the RSS is due to be revoked, the technical studies and background work that went into preparing the document still remain valid. Therefore, these studies are still considered to be of relevance when looking at issues such as the scale of employment land development.

The RSS was subject to an examination and subsequent report from the Panel of Inspectors. Although the RSS, Phase 2 revision was never formally adopted, the detailed technical work that went into underpinning the figures was considered to be robust. The Panel Report outlined that, in terms of employment land, Wyre Forest District should plan for an additional 44 hectares of land over the plan period. This figure was in broad agreement with the findings of the District's original Employment Land Review which forecasted that approximately 43.95 – 46.47ha of new employment land would be required over the plan period. The 44ha was therefore the figure proposed for Examination through the Core Strategy process.

Although never fully adopted the assumptions and studies are considered to be of use for the purposes of strategic planning. However, regardless of the planned abolition of the RSS, the recently Adopted Core Strategy now provides the framework for considering the future development of the District. Therefore, the Core Strategy will provide the clarity and direction in which to prepare site specific allocations and policies, regardless of the situation regarding the RSS and its planned abolition.

Local Policy

Core Strategy

As previously mentioned, Wyre Forest District Council adopted its Core Strategy on the 9th December 2010, after the Inspector found it be 'sound' following an Independent Examination in the summer of 2010.

The Core Strategy outlines the Development Strategy for the District and provides the framework in which the subsequent Development Plan Documents must adhere to. In terms of employment / economic development, the Core Strategy identifies that 44 hectares of employment land needs to be provided for during the life of the plan (2006 – 2026). This figure was included based on the findings of the first Employment Land Review.

The Council, working with GVA Grimley, undertook a comprehensive Employment Land Review (ELR). The ELR provided a large amount of information but the main elements of the review involved:

- Identifying the economic situation within the District
- Producing a detailed forecasting exercise to ascertain the amount of land that would be required for employment use within the District
- Analysing existing and potential future employment sites and making recommendations on their suitability as employment locations

The figures and recommendations used in this study provided the basis for the figure in the Core Strategy, which underpinned its robustness and enabled for the Strategy to be found 'sound'.

However, one of the major changes that occurred as a result of the Core Strategy Examination was the identification of the former British Sugar site as an area for mixed use development, including significant residential, which meant that the whole site would no longer be safeguarded for purely employment use. This will have a knock on affect on the level of available land that is required to be identified for new employment development within the District, and is discussed further in subsequent sections.

SECTION 2: UPDATE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WITHIN WYRE FOREST DISTRICT

Since the production of the Employment Land Review in 2007-08 a number of changes have occurred, in terms of:

- the economic climate;
- the national planning policy framework; and
- Local planning policy.

The changes in circumstances, as identified above have all had an effect on the local economy in one way or another. The worldwide economic downturn has had an impact on all aspects of the national economy and this has been felt at the local level as well, with a number of businesses reducing staffing levels or closing altogether.

In planning policy terms a new national planning policy statement (PPS4) has provided for more flexibility in considering new economic development and the recently adopted Core Strategy also provides a framework to support new development. The previous section dealt with the shift in the planning policy while this section provides an update on the statistics available to monitor the relative health of the local economy, following the economic downturn.

This helps to provide an insight into the changes that have occurred within the District and will help to influence the strategy for the allocation of sites in the Local Development Framework. This section also identifies the changes that have occurred 'on the ground' since the last ELR focussing on what developments have been given planning permission, which permissions have started to be built and those schemes that have been completed.

Economic Statistics – Wyre Forest

There are a number of sources of information which help to provide an insight into the performance of the local economy. The following section provides an update on the economic wellbeing of the District, taking information from sources such as Nomis, Neighbourhood Statistics and the County Council's Research and Intelligence Unit. The indicators broadly follow the guidance provided in Annex C of PPS4.

These statistics help to understand how the District is fairing when compared to the rest of the county, region and nationally. This will therefore help to inform policies accordingly and to see where the strengths and weaknesses of the local economy are.

Employee Jobs

	Wyre Forest	Wyre Forest	West Midlands	Great Britain
	(employee jobs)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Total employee jobs	33,100	-	-	-
Full-time	21,600	65.3	69.4	68.8
Part-time	11,500	34.7	30.6	31.2
Employee jobs by industry				
Manufacturing	6,100	18.4	13.8	10.2
Construction	1,600	5.0	4.9	4.8
Services	25,000	75.6	79.7	83.5
Distribution, hotels & restaurants	9,800	29.5	23.6	23.4
Transport & communications	1,100	3.4	5.8	5.8
Finance, IT, other business activities	4,600	13.8	18.6	22.0
Public admin, education & health	7,800	23.7	27.0	27.0
Other services	1,700	5.3	4.6	5.3
Tourism-related†	3,200	9.7	7.4	8.2

Table 1: Employee Jobs by Industry

Source: ONS annual business inquiry employee analysis, 2008

Notes:

- Data Unavailable

† Tourism consists of industries that are also part of the services industry

% is a proportion of total employee jobs (Employee jobs excludes self-employed, government-supported trainees and HM Forces)

Table 1 provides the breakdown of employee jobs by industry. From the table it is clear to see that manufacturing still forms a key element of the economy of the Wyre Forest. This is to be expected given how the economy has developed within the area over the past century, with a strong reliance on manufacturing, particularly within the development of the carpet industry. The continuing high percentage of employees in the manufacturing sector is something that needs to be considered and understood further in order to influence planning policy.

Other areas where there is a higher proportion of workers when compared to the region or nationally, are in the hotels and restaurant and tourism related sectors. This is reflective of the increasing impact that tourism is having on the local economy, which is underpinned by regionally important tourist attractions which include the Severn Valley Railway, The West Midlands Safari and Leisure Park and the Wyre Forest. This sector remains a key component in the local economy and is identified as a potential growth sector within the local economy. As Table 2 highlights, jobs within the tourism industry within the Wyre Forest has always remained higher than regional or national averages and is becoming a more important sector of the economy.

Tourism related jobs in Wyre Forest – Time Series

Year	Wyre Forest	Wyre Forest	West Midlands	Great Britain
		(%)	(%)	(%)
1998	2,400	6.4	6.4	7.4
1999	3,000	7.9	6.7	7.7
2000	2,600	6.9	6.6	7.6
2001	2,700	8.1	6.9	7.8
2002	2,900	8.5	7	8
2003	3,400	9.9	6.9	8.1
2004	2,900	8.1	7.4	8.2
2005	2,100	6	7.5	8.1
2006	3,300	9.3	7.7	8.3
2007	3,600	10.5	7.7	8.2
2008	3,200	9.7	7.4	8.2

Table 2: Tourism related jobs over time

Source: ONS annual business inquiry employee analysis, 2008

% is a proportion of total employee jobs (Employee jobs excludes self-employed, government-supported trainees and HM Forces)

Therefore, it is important that the District continues to safeguard and plan for all sectors but also consider focussing on the manufacturing and tourism elements of the economy.

Employment by occupation (Apr 2009-Mar 2010)

	Wyre Forest	Wyre Forest	West Midlands	Great Britain
	(numbers)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Soc 2000 major group 1-3	17,800	36.8	40.3	44.3
1 Managers and senior officials	8,700	17.8	14.6	15.7
2 Professional occupations	4,300	8.8	12.4	13.7
3 Associate professional & technical	4,900	10.0	13.1	14.7
Soc 2000 major group 4-5	13,000	26.8	22.7	21.6
4 Administrative & secretarial	5,200	10.7	11.5	11.2
5 Skilled trades occupations	7,800	15.9	11.1	10.4
Soc 2000 major group 6-7	9,600	19.8	16.8	16.2
6 Personal service occupations	4,900	10.0	9.6	8.7
7 Sales and	4,700	9.6	7.1	7.4

customer service occs				
Soc 2000 major group 8-9	8,000	16.6	20.3	17.9
8 Process plant & machine operatives	4,100	8.3	8.2	6.6
9 Elementary occupations	4,000	8.2	12.0	11.1

Table 3: Employment by Occupation

Source: ONS annual population survey, 2010

Numbers and % are for those of 16+

% is a proportion of all persons in employment

Table 3 provides a breakdown of the various types and levels of occupation by different sector groupings. The table provides an insight into the areas where there are a greater proportion of workers in the Wyre Forest, compared to the regional and national averages.

From Table 3 it is clear to see that the District has a lower proportion of workers in the 1-3 group. Although there are some variations in this, as the District has a higher percentage in Group1: managers and senior officials. Where there is a much higher percentage of workers when compared to the regional and national percentages is in the skilled trade and sales and customer service, which perhaps reflects the dual importance of the manufacturing and tourism elements of the local economy.

Table 3 provides a proportional breakdown of occupation by sector and is not in itself an indication of how the local economy is performing. It does, however, provide an insight into which areas provide jobs for the local resident population and where the potential for focussing efforts on strengthening sectors lies.

Workplaces by Size Band - District Analysis

Number of Employees	Bromsgrove	Malvern Hills	Redditch	Worcester City	Wychavon	Wyre Forest
1 to 10	88.1	89.1	81.9	81.3	88.1	86.5
11 to 49	9.5	9.1	13.5	13.8	9.3	10.3
50-199	2.1	1.6	3.8	4	2.3	2.8
200+	0.3	0.3	0.8	1	0.3	0.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 4: Workplaces by size band

Source: Annual Business Inquiry 2008

Table 4 helps to identify the relative size of businesses that are operating within the District, and compares this to neighbouring authorities. Although the figures are relatively similar throughout the different District's in Worcestershire, what this table helps to identify is the importance that small and medium size businesses play in the economy of the local area. A total of 96.8% of people work in businesses which employee 49 people or less and 86.5% of these businesses employee less than 10 people. This highlights how vital these businesses are to the local economy and this needs to be reflected in how the planning policies of the area are developed. Conversely, as the proportion of businesses that employee 50 or more people are lower, it will also be important that these firms are retained and enhanced to ensure that similar levels of people continue to be employed and that the District can react to their needs and efficiencies.

VAT Registrations / Deregistration

Year	Wyre Forest (businesses)
2000	2,855
2001	2,885
2002	2,955
2003	2,995
2004	3,025
2005	3,095
2006	3,150
2007	3,220

Table 5: VAT registrations/deregistration

Source: DTI Small Business Service - VAT registrations/deregistration by industry (Nomis), 2007

VAT registrations and de-registrations are the best official guide to the pattern of business start-ups and closures. They are an indicator of the level of entrepreneurship and of the health of the business population. As such they are used widely in regional and local economic planning. Table 5 indicates that over the years there has been a net gain in the number of businesses that have registered within the Wyre Forest District, which is a positive trend, especially given the relatively uncertain economic climate.

An indicator from the ONS website provides further information on business start ups and closures, which helps to supplement the VAT information. This data is compiled from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR), which contains information on VAT traders as well as PAYE employers in a statistical register comprising of over 2 million enterprises, representing nearly 99 per cent of UK economic activity.

Business Demography: Enterprise Births & Deaths

		Wyre Forest	West Midlands	England
All Active Enterprises	Count	3665	191390	2007180
Births	Count	430	24025	266165
Births	Percentage	11.7	12.6	13.3
Deaths	Count	325	19215	203100
Deaths	Percentage	8.9	10	10.1

Table 6: Enterprise Births and Deaths 08

		Wyre Forest	West Midlands	England
All Active Enterprises	Count	3710	191490	2024990
Births	Count	380	20750	238895
Births	Percentage	10.2	10.8	11.8
Deaths	Count	315	17760	192955
Deaths	Percentage	8.5	9.3	9.5

Table 7: Enterprise Births and Deaths 09

Source: Neighbourhood Statistics Website (www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk) 2010

Note regarding this Dataset: This dataset shows the number of enterprise 'births' and 'deaths' as a proportion of the active enterprise population for the same year. Births are the number of new enterprises created in the reference year, deaths are enterprises that have ceased trading in the reference year. In both cases, enterprises that are removed or added to the population as a result of mergers, break-ups, split-ups or other restructuring are not included

Tables 6 and 7 indicate that between 2008 and 2009 the District actually received a net gain of business start-ups (+45 businesses).

The tables also identify that although a lesser percentage of business 'births' have occurred within the Wyre Forest than in the West Midlands and England over the two years highlighted, this is offset by the fact that the percentage of business 'deaths' has also been lower than the West Midlands and England. The percentage change for the two years is as follows:

Percentage change between Enterprise Births & Enterprise Deaths, (2008 & 2009)

	Wyre Forest	West Midlands	England
Births 08	11.7	12.6	13.3
Deaths 08	8.9	10	10.1
Percentage Difference	+2.8	+2.6	+3.2
Births 09	10.2	10.8	11.8
Deaths 09	8.5	9.3	9.5
Percentage Difference	+1.7	+1.5	+2.3

Table 8: Percentage change in Births and Deaths in Enterprise

Table 8 identifies that although the Wyre Forest is not performing as well as the rest of England, it is in a better position, with regard to business growth, when compared to the rest of the West Midlands region.

All People Economically Active (aged 16-64)

Date	Wyre Forest	West Midlands	Great Britain
	(%)	(%)	(%)
Apr 04-Mar 05	75.2	75.8	76.4
Apr 05-Mar 06	74.5	74.9	76.4
Apr 06-Mar 07	74.3	75.4	76.6
Apr 07-Mar 08	72.1	75.4	76.7
Apr 08-Mar 09	74.9	75.2	76.8
Apr 09-Mar 10	80.7	75.6	76.5

Table 9: Economically Active Population

Source: ONS annual population survey, 2010

Table 9 provides a time series analysis of the people who are economically active within the District, compared to the regional and national averages. The table indicates that the District has generally kept in line with the regional average of people in employment, although it has often been lower than the national average.

However, the District has seen a rise in employment levels over the recent years, especially in the last financial year (09-10) where the District was outperforming both the regional and national average.

The uplift in people in employment in the last financial year provides a positive outlook for the District, especially given the poor economic climate. It therefore appears that the District is coping well under a challenging climate, with a high proportion of people now classed as being economically active.

Table 10 provides a breakdown of the same figures but compares it to the Districts in Worcestershire and also provides a change over time from 2007-2010.

Economic Activity Rates by District (% of Working Age Population)

District	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	Percentage point change 2007/08 to 2009/10
Bromsgrove	85	83.6	85.9	0.9
Malvern Hills	74.1	76.9	81.5	7.4
Redditch	79.8	77.3	76	-3.8
Worcester City	81.6	79.4	79.9	-1.7
Wychavon	78.1	82.2	82.1	4
Wyre Forest	72.1	74.9	80.7	2.6
Worcestershire	78.5	79.2	81.1	2.6
West Midlands	76.5	76.6	75.6	-0.9
United Kingdom	75.4	75.2	76.3	0.9

Table 10: Economic Activity Rates by District

Source: Annual Population Survey, 2009/10.

Table 10 indicates the increase in the economically active population within the District over the past three years. It shows that the District and Worcestershire in general is performing well in terms of the uplift in the economically active population. The District has seen a rise of 2.6% in the economic activity rates of the working age population over the three years to a level that is now higher than the regional and national average.

Economically Inactive

Date	Wyre Forest	Wyre Forest	West Midlands	Great Britain
		(%)	(%)	(%)
Apr 04-Mar 05	15,400	24.8	24.2	23.6
Apr 05-Mar 06	16,100	25.5	25.1	23.6
Apr 06-Mar 07	16,500	25.7	24.6	23.4
Apr 07-Mar 08	17,800	27.9	24.6	23.3
Apr 08-Mar 09	15,500	25.1	24.8	23.2
Apr 09-Mar 10	12,100	19.3	24.4	23.5

Table 11: Economically Inactive population

Source: ONS annual population survey, 2010

Numbers and % are for those of aged 16-64

% is a proportion of resident population of area aged 16-6

Table 11 provides the statistics for the economically inactive population, which unsurprisingly is a reverse of the data collected in Table 10. It identifies, as anticipated, that the uplift in the economically active population within the District means that the economically inactive population reduces. Although this is the reverse of the figures included in Table 10 it does help to show a positive trend for the District, especially within the most recent financial year.

JSA claimants by age and duration (November 2010)

	Wyre Forest	Wyre Forest	West Midlands	Great Britain
	(numbers)	(%)	(%)	(%)
By age of claimant				
Aged 18-24	720	32.5	29.8	28.5
Aged 25-49	1,105	49.9	55.0	55.7
Aged 50 and over	390	17.6	15.0	15.5
By duration of claim				
Up to 6 months	1,610	72.5	63.7	66.9
Over 6 up to 12 months	315	14.2	15.7	16.1
Over 12 months	295	13.3	20.6	16.9

Table 12: JSA Claimants

Source: ONS claimant count - age and duration, 2010

% is a proportion of all JSA claimants

Table 12 provides a breakdown of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance by age of the claimants and by the duration of the claim. The table indicates that the District has a higher proportion of younger people who are claiming job seekers allowance, when compared to the regional and national average.

Additionally, the District has a lesser percentage of the longer term unemployed with the majority of claimants falling in the up to 6 months category.

The statistics indicate, therefore, that the main challenges lie with the short term unemployed and in targeting the younger age groups.

Total claimants

Date	Wyre Forest	Wyre Forest	West Midlands	Great Britain
		(%)	(%)	(%)
May-00	7,190	11.5	15.1	14.6
May-01	7,330	11.7	15.0	14.2
May-02	7,800	12.5	15.5	14.7
May-03	7,940	12.7	15.5	14.6
May-04	7,810	12.5	15.1	14.1
May-05	7,900	12.6	15.1	13.9
May-06	8,010	12.8	15.2	13.9
May-07	7,960	12.7	14.9	13.4
May-08	7,770	12.5	14.7	13.2
May-09	9,440	15.3	17.0	14.9
May-10	9,030	14.7	16.6	14.7

Table 13: Total Claimants

Source: DWP benefit claimants - working age client group, 2010

Notes: Claimants Include: Job seekers, ESA and incapacity benefits, Lone parents, Carers, Others on income related benefits, Disabled, Bereaved

In terms of total claimants, Table 13 indicates that the District has similar levels to the rest of the Great Britain, although there has been a marked increase in the amount of people making claims over the past three years. The District continues to have a lower proportion of claimants when compared to the regional average.

Average Household Income by District

District	2010 Average Income (£)	Change from 2009 (%)
Bromsgrove	40,896	3.2
Malvern Hills	36,121	0.6
Redditch	36,675	2
Worcester City	35,119	1
Wychavon	37,935	1.3
Wyre Forest	33,790	0.1
Worcestershire	36,758	1.4
West Midlands	33,121	-0.1
United Kingdom	35,294	0.8

Table 14: Average Household Income

Source: CACI Ltd, PayCheck Data, 2010

Table 14 indicates that the average household income within the District is still lower than the national average and is the lowest in Worcestershire. The District average is higher than the regional average and has increased between 2009-2010 but there still remains a challenge to try and increase this to be more in line with the national average.

Gross Weekly Pay - All Full Time Workers

Year	Wyre Forest	West Midlands	Great Britain
	(£)	(£)	(£)
2002	343.20	366.00	392.70
2003	370.10	378.90	406.20
2004	346.40	392.90	421.30
2005	377.30	404.70	432.80
2006	385.10	416.20	445.90
2007	408.90	431.10	460.00
2008	405.70	449.80	480.00
2009	438.20	456.80	490.50
2010	421.90	469.20	501.80

Table 15: Gross Weekly Pay

Source: ONS annual survey of hours and earnings - resident analysis, 2010

This table reaffirms the fact that the workers in Wyre Forest are generally less well paid than the workers in other areas of the country. The average is quite a lot lower than the national average (£80 per week in 2010) which is of slight concern.

Qualifications – NVQ4 and above

Date	Wyre Forest (Numbers)	Wyre Forest (%)	West Midlands (%)	Great Britain (%)
Jan 05- Dec 05	11,800	19.4	22.9	26.5
Jan 06- Dec 06	12,200	19.8	23.8	27.4
Jan 07- Dec 07	11,900	19.9	24.5	28.5
Jan 08- Dec 08	12,400	20.0	24.2	28.6
Jan 09- Dec 09	14,000	22.2	24.8	29.9

Table 16: Qualifications

Source: ONS annual population survey, 2010

Numbers and % are for those of aged 16-64

% is a proportion of resident population of area aged 16-64

Table 16 provides a breakdown of the proportion of people with qualifications of NVQ4 and above (equivalent diploma, First degree, nursing or teaching qualification, HND). The table indicates that the District has a lower percentage of people achieving this higher qualification when compared to the regional and national averages. However, there is a positive trend that has occurred from 2005 – 2009, with an increase of 2,200 more people achieving the higher level qualification.

Concluding Remarks

The statistics help to identify the changes that have occurred in Wyre Forest over the recent years. The statistics highlight that Wyre Forest District is operating fairly well in difficult economic times and often is out-performing on indicators when compared to the regional and national average. Most notably, the District currently has a higher than average economically active population and an increasing business start up and registration rate.

There still remain challenges, however, in improving the educational attainment of the District's residents and also in trying to improve the weekly earnings of the workers. Furthermore, tackling the unemployment levels for the younger age groups should also be a priority.

There are no easy solutions but it is important that the planning policy framework is able to respond flexibly to business requirements wherever possible. A wide range of potential improvements fall outside of the remit of planning policy, but ensuring a flexible and pro-active approach to new development should help to maintain and improve the economic outlook for the District.

Update on Employment Land Availability – Existing Supply Sites

There have been a number of changes to the existing ‘supply’ sites since the first Employment Land Review was completed in 2007 – 08. A number of sites have since been developed out for employment use and others have been given planning permission. This section, therefore, provides an update on the existing supply sites, using the most recent Employment Land Availability Report.

The sites included on the report are split into different categories, which are as follows:

- Completions
- Sites under construction
- Sites with outstanding Planning Permission
- Sites which have lapsed Planning Permission
- Site allocated in the Adopted Local Plan

However, as the plan period runs from 2006 – 2026 it is important that any developments that have occurred since the start of the plan period are taken into account. The annual Employment Land Availability Report provides the requisite information on completed developments since 2006 as well as the sites under construction, those still outstanding and those which have lapsed. This enables an understanding of the currently available land for economic development to be realised.

Each of the identified areas is discussed in more detail below.

Completions since 2006:

A number of developments have been completed since 2006 which contribute towards the 44 hectare requirement set in the Core Strategy, and therefore must be considered. The completions, per year, are identified below:

April 2006 – March 2007: 0.71 hectares

April 2007 – March 2008: 2.33 hectares

April 2008 – March 2009: 4.05 hectares

April 2009 – March 2010: 3.53 hectares

Total of employment land developed: 10.62 hectares

The sites that have been completed over this period are as follows:

Site No.	Location	Development	Site Size (Ha)	Year Completed
22	Foley Business Park, Kidderminster	Development of new Industrial units B1, B2, B8	0.69	2006 – 07
112	Former Telephone Exchange, Rock	Conversion to office use	0.02	2006 – 07
148	Park Lane, Bewdley	Conversion to office use	0.01	2007 – 08
150	Walter Nash Road, Kidderminster	Initial phase of Finepoint Development – 10 Industrial Units	2.32	2007 – 08
074	Land opposite Hoo Farm, Worcester Road, Kidderminster	Easter Park Development, 9 Industrial Units B2/B8	3.12	2008 – 09
136	Wilden Lane Industrial	Two new Industrial units	0.15	2008 – 09

	Estate	(B2 / B8)		
152	Walter Nash Road, Kidderminster	Phase 2 of Finepoint Development – One Industrial Unit (Citylink)	0.78	2008 – 09
071	Rushock Trading Estate	Warehouse / Distribution storage	2.93	2009 – 10
140	Oldington Lane, Firs Industrial Estate	Development of two new Industrial units	0.11	2009 – 10
155	Lichfield Street, Stourport-on-Severn	Change of use to Office	0.03	2009 – 10
157	Callimore Farm, Rushock	Change of use to Offices	0.4	2009 – 10
158	Friars Farm	Change of Use to Office	0.06	2009 – 10

These sites no longer form part of the supply due to their completion. This means that the sites that featured in the assessment sheets for the first Employment Land Review are now no longer subject to individual site assessment; and subsequently do not appear in this update study. However, the land completed does contribute towards the 44ha requirement set in the Core Strategy. This completion rate is roughly in line with the 11ha 5 year rolling requirement

Sites under Construction

The Employment Land Availability (ELA) of April 2010 identifies 5 sites as being classified as ‘under construction’, a number of these are historic sites with permissions that were considered to be being implemented through virtue of works undertaken to provide access to the sites. Although these sites have yet to materialise, it is still considered that they are appropriate areas of land to meet the need over the plan period, and they help to provide a mixed portfolio within the District.

Sites classified as ‘under construction’

Site No.	Location	Proposal	Site Size (Ha)
055	Rear of Lisle Avenue	Erection of an Industrial unit, construction of roadways, parking areas & alterations to Lisle Avenue	1.03
062	Bewdley Business Park	Construction of 13 units for B1 and B2 uses.	2.84
077	Barracks Road, Sandy Lane Industrial Estate	Development of fifteen industrial units for B1 use – part built	0.91
145	Turbo Spares, Sandy Lane Industrial Estate	Erection of two storey building for warehouse and offices – part built	0.07
156	Cursley Lane, Kidderminster	Change of use to light industrial unit – close to completion	0.1

These sites provide a total of **4.95 hectares** of employment land to help meet the economic needs of the District.

Sites with Outstanding Planning Permission

There are a number of parcels of land that currently benefit from planning permission for 'business use' and these must also be considered as they contribute to the 44ha requirement.

The following sites are currently identified as having 'outstanding' planning permission, which will contribute to the overall target identified in the Core Strategy. Given the presence of planning permission it is considered that these areas should be able to contribute towards the 5-year supply of sites, which is an important aspect of the Development Strategy. The sites are as follows:

Site No.	Location	Proposal	Site Size (Ha)
023	Finepoint – Residual, Walter Nash Road West, Kidderminster	Phased development of site for B1, B2, B8 use	2.72
040	35 Mitton Street, Stourport-on-Severn	Erection of light industrial building	0.27
127	Foley Business Park, Stourport Road, Kidderminster	Industrial development, B1, B2, B8 use	0.29
130	Wilden Lane Industrial Estate, Wilden Lane, Stourport	Erection of storage building and office	0.23
138	The Toll House, Stourport-on-Severn	Change of use to three units for use including B1a	0.14
143	Briten Ltd, Hoo Farm Industrial Estate, Kidderminster	Erection of new warehouse building (B8) and associated parking	0.64
144	Hundred Acre Farm, Broome	Conversion of Agricultural Building to B1 use	0.09
149	Rear of Daguerre House, Hoo Farm Industrial Estate, Kidderminster	Erection of two storey office building with associated landscaping and car parking	0.14
151	Edwin Avenue, Hoo Farm Industrial Estate, Kidderminster	Erection of a new building and formation of an external storage yard within the application site	0.24
153	Butts Lane, Stone	Conversion of existing buildings to provide 22 live works units, business support facility for residents/community meeting room	2.01
154	Foley Business Park, Stourport Road, Kidderminster	Erection of three Industrial Units	0.27
159	Gemini Business Park, Stourport Road, Kidderminster	Refurbishment and sub-division of existing unit 4, erection of one 5-unit industrial building for B1, B2 & B8 uses; new parking, layout, access roads and landscaping	0.39
160	Severn Biotech Ltd, Unit 2, park Lane Industrial Estate, Kidderminster	Two storey office/laboratory building with glazed link to existing building	0.13
161	Finepoint (Phase 3), Walter Nash Road West, Kidderminster	Three storey office block with associated car parking, hard	0.38

		and soft landscaping	
162	22/23 Bridge Street, Stourport-on-Severn	Installation of new shopfront, erection of two storey rear extension & change of use of first floor to offices (Class B1)	0.1

The total area of sites that currently benefit from planning permission but are yet to be implemented is **8.04 hectares**. These sites will help to maintain the rolling supply of land available for economic development over the next five years.

Sites with lapsed Planning Consent

A number of sites have planning permissions that have lapsed over time. The following parcels of land are still considered to be suitable areas for future employment development, as they generally form smaller parcels of larger well established employment sites:

Site No.	Location	Comment	Site Size (Ha)
011	Sandy Lane Industrial Estate	A parcel of vacant land on an established industrial estate which is still considered suitable for business use	0.74
021	Wilden Lane Industrial Estate	A parcel of vacant land on an established industrial estate which is still considered suitable for business use	0.45
059	Park Lane Industrial Estate	Likely to be developed out for a hotel use	0.14
073	Crossley Retail Park	Residual area of land allocated for business use – concerns regarding flood risk within this area which may render any scheme unviable	1.14
076	Edwin Avenue, Hoo Farm Industrial Estate	Not considered to be likely to be developed due to other proposed developments and change of interest in site	0.53
090	2 Lisle Avenue, Kidderminster	Permission lapsed a while ago and the existing buildings are now well used. Not considered to be a suitable site to continue to include in as available	0.23
105	Arthur Drive, Hoo Farm Industrial Estate	A parcel of vacant land on an established industrial estate which is still considered suitable for business use	0.37
119	Land rear of Felix Adams, Arthur Drive, Hoo Farm Industrial Estate	Site no longer considered to be available due to extension of existing unit	0.1
139	Arthur Drive, Hoo Farm Industrial Estate	Not considered to be a suitable site for continued inclusion on the ELA	0.04

This gives a total of **3.74 hectares** of land that has been subjected to planning approval in the past and is still considered to be a viable site to meet demand in the future.

Adopted Local Plan Sites

The Employment Land Availability Report also identifies a number of sites that were allocated via the Adopted Local Plan for employment purposes. The two sites included are as follows:

Former British Sugar Site (Phase 1) – 12ha

The Employment Land Availability identified the first phase of the former British Sugar Site as a potential employment site available for development. The second phase of the site was not included as, at the time, it was considered that the second phase would not be implemented until the first was developed. However, the entire site was identified in the Adopted Local Plan for employment generating uses.

However, the situation regarding the site has changed over time. As previously identified, during the examination into the Core Strategy the owners of the site provided compelling evidence to identify that the development of the site for purely employment generating uses was unviable. They therefore proposed that the site would need to be considered as a mixed use opportunity with a significant element of residential development to enable the employment uses to be delivered. This proposal was accepted by the examining inspector which now means the site will be looked at as a mixed use development.

The site will still have a large role to play in terms of delivering economic development but due to the size of the site and the potential mix of uses it might be appropriate to consider other economic development types as identified in PPS4, rather than just the traditional B1, B2, B8 use classes. This will be explored further through the master plan process which is being undertaken to inform the Site Allocations and Policies DPD.

Lea Castle Hospital Site – 6ha

The Lea Castle Hospital Site was designated as a major developed site in the Green Belt within the Adopted Local Plan. A portion of the site, at the time of designation, was deemed to be derelict and it was identified that this may benefit from redevelopment. The Adopted Local Plan provided a policy permitting, subject to certain criteria, the development of a high tech (B1a) Business Park.

However, since the adoption of the Local Plan there have been a number of changes to this site. Firstly, the site has continued to decline in operations and now the majority of the site is relatively unused. Secondly, there has been little interest in the site, even during relatively buoyant economic times, for the development of a Business Park. Therefore, it is considered that the whole of the site now needs to be re-assessed as to its continuing suitability for designation as a High Tech Business Park and also to recognise that the wider area of the site now also needs consideration.

The situation regarding both of these sites has changed since their allocation within the Adopted Local Plan. It is therefore deemed appropriate to re-consider these sites,

in their entirety through the Site Allocations and Policies process. The analysis of these sites is included in the next section of the report.

Rushock Trading Estate

This is a previously developed site in the Green Belt and is a well established employment area. A number of parcels of land exist within the site boundary, which could help to meet the target of employment land required. It is recommended that the continuation of allocation for employment use in the Site Allocations process is appropriate.

Calculations

Taking into account the above analysis, the following figures regarding employment land are identified:

- Completions since 2006: 10.62 hectares.
- Sites Under Construction: 4.95 hectares.
- Sites with Outstanding Planning Permission: 8.04 hectares
- Sites with lapsed Planning Consent: 3.74 hectares

Total hecтарage of Sites: 27.35 hectares

This leaves a residual requirement of approximately 17 hectares of employment land that will need to be identified through the site allocations process. These calculations do not include the existing Adopted Local Plan allocations and their suitability, along with identification of other potential areas, will be discussed in the next section.

This Employment Land Review Update will therefore help to identify the sites required to meet the residual need. This will look at the sites included within the first ELR and will also be informed by the Development Strategy contained in the Adopted Core Strategy.

Furthermore, this update will identify the important employment sites within the District which require safeguarding from competing uses, in order to ensure a balanced portfolio of sites is available throughout the area.

Employment Land Requirement - Forecasting

This section provides a brief understanding as to why new forecasting for employment land was not considered to be necessary for this updated study.

The main reasoning behind this approach is that the methodology in the original Employment Land Review is still considered to be robust, as are the original employment projections, which were always intended to be long-term projections taking into account economic cycles. Such projections should therefore not need to be changed regularly given the time frame in which they cover.

Crucially, the approach and target land requirement is also confirmed by the figure set in the District's Adopted Core Strategy (December 2010) which was agreed by Independent Examination as an appropriate strategy for the District. Although identified in the Inspector's report as being at the upper level of supply (44hectares), it is considered that the importance of providing a balanced portfolio of sites, as well as taking a long term view and maintaining available sites to help economic recovery, is vital.

Given the robust nature of the Examination process it is considered that there is no requirement to revisit this figure, which is now set in an Adopted Development Plan Document, as it provides a long-term aspiration for employment levels in the District. Furthermore, economic conditions have historically fluctuated and been subject to 'cycles' and when planning for the long term future of the District it is important that sufficient land is provided to meet businesses needs, and to help with economic recovery.

SECTION 3: SITE ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The analysis of the employment sites within the District follows the same methodology as the previous Employment Land Review. However, in assessing the sites regard has also been had to the recently adopted Core Strategy and the associated Development Strategy which helps to inform the final site selection.

The sites included within the annual Employment Land Availability, as identified in section 2, are considered, on the whole, to remain viable and appropriate for employment development into the future. Many of these sites benefit from planning permission and are considered to remain important areas to meet the requirement identified in the Core Strategy.

The analysis of sites has built on the information contained within the existing ELR and has updated the status of sites where appropriate. Some of the sites have also been altered to reflect the adoption of the Core Strategy and the influence that this has had, most notably on the former British Sugar Site.

The focus for this section is therefore to ensure that important sites are protected from competing uses where appropriate and ensure that there are enough allocations to meet the residual requirement needed for the rest of the plan period.

This section also reviewed the existing supply sites, as discussed in Section 2 and the results of the assessments are also included here.

Existing sites recommended for retention / safeguarding for employment / economic development use

As well as ensuring that there are sufficient new sites to meet the demand for employment floorspace over the next 15 years, it is vital that existing employment sites are retained and safeguarded from competing uses. This section outlines the sites that are recommended for retention through the site allocations process as they are considered to be important employment destinations which are suitable for continuing use during the life of the plan. The sites are split according to location.

Kidderminster

STOURPORT ROAD EMPLOYMENT CORRIDOR		
Site Number	Site Name	Site Area
1.1	Brintons	5.40
1.2	Coppice Trading Estate	2.89
1.3	Firs Industrial Estate	8.65
1.4	Foley Business Park	6.6
1.5	Foley Industrial Estate	6.59
1.6	Klark industrial Park	0.59
1.7	Lisle Avenue	3.85
1.9	Oldington Trading Estate	6.44
1.11	Vale Industrial Estate	3.90
1.12	Ceramaspeed	3.22

There are two other sites in this location, which were included in the supply section of the previous ELR, that are also proposed to be retained in the plan for employment use. They are:

- Finepoint Development – 7.30ha
- Folkes Forge – 5.75ha (This site was taken out of the supply because it has implemented a permission for a waste recycling plant. However, it is considered important that it is safeguarded as such on the Development Plan Proposals Map)

HOO FARM / SPENNELLS / HOOBROOK (s)		
Site Number	Site Name	Site Area
2.1	Hoo Farm	22.56
2.2	Spennells Valley	4.18
2.3	Brockway	1.14
2.4	Hoobrook (South)	5.51
2.5	Summerfield (Within District Boundary)	34.49

There is another site, which was included on the supply in the previous Employment Land Review, which is now fully developed and should also be protected for continued employment use, which is Easter Park (3.12ha)

WORCESTER ROAD AND HOOBROOK (N)		
Site Number	Site Name	Site Area
3.1	Worcester Road	11.16
3.2	Hoobrook (North)	4.37

WORCESTER ROAD AND HOOBROOK (N)		
Site Number	Site Name	Site Area
4.1	Meadow Mills Industrial Estate	1.67

NORTH OF KIDDERMINSTER		
Site Number	Site Name	Site Area
5.4	Puxton Mill	1.44

GREENHILL		
Site Number	Site Name	Site Area
6.1	Greenhill Industrial Estate	4.43

The sites listed within the above tables are all recommended to be retained for employment use. The safeguarding of these sites from competing uses will ensure that they will be able to remain for employment use during the life of the plan. This provides certainty to the existing occupiers and also to potential new businesses who may wish to locate to these sites.

Stourport-on-Severn

SANDY LANE		
Site Number	Site Name	Site Area
8.1	Sandy Lane Industrial Estate	18.02

WORCESTER ROAD		
Site Number	Site Name	Site Area
9.1	Riverside Business Centre	3.09
9.2	OGL / IBM	3.2
9.3	Thomas Vale	1.3

WILDEN		
Site Number	Site Name	Site Area
10.1	Wilden Industrial Estate	6.38

BEWDLEY ROAD		
Site Number	Site Name	Site Area
10.1	Morgan Advanced Ceramics	4.2

The sites listed above are recommended to be retained for continued employment use during the life of the plan. These sites help to create a varied portfolio of employment locations in and around Stourport. It is considered to be vital that these sites remain for economic development to ensure that the town remains sustainable, offering employment, as well as homes. These sites will help to provide employment opportunities and in conjunction with the service, tourism and retail sectors of the town should help to create a diverse portfolio of job opportunities. By retaining these sites, certainty will be provided to existing businesses that their operations can continue and this should also help to attract businesses to these areas of the town through positive and flexible economic development policies.

There are two main changes to the table since the previous ELR was undertaken. This is because the Riverside Business Centre is now proposed to be retained in its current form, as an employment location. Furthermore, there has been a suggested boundary change to the Morgan Advanced Ceramics Site to reflect the recent planning approval at this location. This is discussed further in the subsequent section.

Bewdley and Rural

BEWDLEY AND RURAL		
Site Number	Site Name	Site Area
12.1	Rushock Trading Estate	10.52
13.8	Bewdley Business Park	5.4

There is one main site that is currently identified as an employment location within the rural areas. This site is Rushock Trading Estate. The site remains an important employment destination within the District and its continuing use as an employment

site is recommended to be retained through the plan period, following on from the previous allocation in the Adopted Local Plan. It is also suggested that Bewdley Business Park be specifically allocated as a potential site for new business use and to protect the existing businesses in this location. It is considered that the site could provide for new employment opportunities, potentially linked to the Wyre Forest and the Grow with Wyre project.

Other Sites:

Land between Hoo Farm and Summerfield – This is a parcel of land that lies between the built up extent of Summerfield and the Hoo Farm Industrial Estate. The site is currently zoned for employment use via the local plan. The site is owned by the Summerfield factory and currently performs a role in terms of providing a ‘blast zone’ from the adjacent plant. However, this could provide a location for new employment development in the future should the business be scaled back or changes made to the operations on the adjacent site. The site has now been included as part of the wider Summerfield factory site size, due to the relationship between the two areas of land and the fact that they are in the same ownership.

Cursley Distribution Park – This site is located within the West Midlands Green Belt. It is currently a well used storage area and is proposed to be retained for this use. It is not identified as an employment area and will remain washed over by the Green belt which will govern the type of development that will be permissible from this location.

Titan Steel Wheels – This site is used by a large employer and it is located within the West Midlands Green Belt. The site is in active use and it is proposed that it remains so until no longer a viable operation. It is not identified as an employment area and will remain washed over by the Green belt which will govern the type of development that will be permissible from this location.

Lea Castle – This site is located to the north of Kidderminster within the Green Belt, the site is a former hospital site and is currently being considered for a mix of uses to be developed in this location, including employment uses.

Sites recommended to be considered for alternative uses / allocations:

Kidderminster

Site No.	Site Name	Site Area	Comment	Recommendation
	Former British Sugar Site	24	<p>This site has been identified through the Core Strategy as being suitable for a mixed use development, including a significant number of homes.</p> <p>There will still remain an important element of employment / economic development to come from the site and the make-up of this is being developed through the master-plan process. The Council is working pro-actively with the owners of the site to produce a master plan that will meet the District's needs and remain commercially viable.</p> <p>The final level of employment generation, in terms of land take, is proposed to be roughly half of the site (12ha)</p>	<p>Suggest allocation of a mixed use site, in line with the Adopted Core Strategy. Requirement for approximately 12 hectares of land to provide for economic development.</p>
	<p>Churchfields Master Plan Area:</p> <p>Churchfields Georgian Carpets Stoney Lane Lime Kiln Bridge</p>	Total Approx 13ha	<p>A collection of employment sites to the north of Kidderminster town centre have all been identified as part of a regeneration initiative and are currently the subject of a master-planning process being undertaken by MADE.</p> <p>These sites are collectively known as the 'Churchfields' area. The master plan is looking at the potential for an urban village concept to be developed in this area, although there are also known pressures for retail development within this location.</p> <p>Although potential exists to incorporate some employment development in the master plan, it will not be to the same scale as currently exists.</p> <p>These areas of land are therefore likely to be redeveloped, based on the ongoing master planning work and therefore their allocation through the LDF process will need to be altered to reflect the ongoing regeneration initiatives.</p>	<p>Allocation of these sites to be determined through the master-planning process. However, the employment element is anticipated to be minimal, especially when compared to the current make up of the sites.</p> <p>Therefore, the current allocation of employment will need to be reviewed.</p>

Site No.	Site Name	Site Area	Comment	Recommendation
	Park Lane		<p>This site already has a mix of uses and now another element of the site is subject to planning permission for the development of a hotel.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that this area would be more usefully zoned as a mixed use area, rather than for solely employment uses.</p> <p>This would reflect more fully the current operations and the aspirations for this site to become more of a mixed use destination.</p>	<p>Recommend the site be allocated for mixed use development to reflect current and proposed uses for the area. This will provide for the flexibility to meet the competing demands of the site.</p>
	Park Street		<p>This site is an existing employment site situated to the west of Kidderminster Town Centre. It is a mix of unit sizes and occupiers and has a healthy occupancy rate.</p> <p>There is a potential conflict between the existing operations and neighbouring residential properties. Furthermore, given the sites elevated position the design aesthetics of this particular area are quite poor and could be improved.</p> <p>Given that there are existing businesses which are fully in use but there remain a number of conflicts with surrounding uses, as well as the unsympathetic design of the site in this elevated position it is considered the most appropriate way forward would be to allocate the site for mixed use development. This provides the flexibility for the site to respond to market demands whilst allowing the businesses to continue to operate effectively.</p>	<p>Recommend to allocate as a mixed use area with the potential for various aspects of the sites to be considered more flexibly as to the most appropriate use.</p>
	Stourvale Mills		<p>The current allocation in this area appears to be slightly odd and is therefore recommended to be altered to reflect the current development footprint.</p>	<p>Retention of use but allocation to include all of the existing units.</p>
	Land at Crossley Retail Park		<p>Although the site is proposed to be retained in its current designation, there may be opportunities to consider utilising this land to improve links between Churchfields and Crossley Retail Park and this will need to be reflected in policy.</p>	<p>Proposed retention of allocation but with flexibility to consider uses that may help the redevelopment of Churchfields</p>
	Land between Foley and Vale		<p>The relatively mature group of trees should be preserved through an appropriate allocation, reflecting its current status and the land that lies to the west of the existing</p>	<p>Recommended to be allocated as urban open space.</p>

Site No.	Site Name	Site Area	Comment	Recommendation
			designation.	
	Harriers Industrial Estate		Planning permission granted for development of residential dwellings. Site was allocated for residential use within the Adopted Local Plan and is no longer considered to be a viable site for employment into the future. It is anticipated that the site will be developed out for residential use within the next few years.	Zoned in the local plan for residential development and permission granted for 28 dwellings. Will therefore be retained for residential use.
	Oasis and Reilloc Chain	2.69	This site was recommended in the previous ELR to be retained for employment purposes. However, further discussions with the land owners to understand their aspirations for the site, coupled with concerns about the continuing viability for these businesses to operate from this location, has meant that other uses are now being considered in this location.	Explore the potential for other uses to be developed on the site.

Stourport

Site No.	Site Name	Site Area	Comment	Recommendation
	Car Garages along Worcester Road		<p>This site currently has a number of different occupiers which are used at varying levels. The site is predominantly occupied by a car showroom with other smaller units and temporary uses, such as a car wash also evident in this location</p> <p>The site is a relatively small pocket of land situated in a predominantly residential area. Given its proximity to housing the continued effectiveness of its industrial nature could be brought into question.</p> <p>The various units on the sites are fairly poor in appearance and form and currently appear to provide for temporary use, with a number of units appearing to be vacant.</p> <p>Overall, it is considered that this site should be allocated for residential development. There are a number of examples of recent developments within the vicinity of this site and it is</p>	Consider allocations for residential use within the Site Allocations and Policies DPD, subject to assessment through the SHLAA.

Site No.	Site Name	Site Area	Comment	Recommendation
			considered that the site would benefit from residential use. Representations have been received from the owners of the site, who want to explore the possibility of developing houses on this parcel of land, which highlights its potential deliverability.	
	Parsons Chain	3.71	<p>This site is located to the east of Stourport on Severn and is situated along the Hartlebury Road.</p> <p>The site was formerly home to a chain making factory which operated from this location. The site has now been vacant and cleared for a number of years and has been subject to development pressures to consider an alternative use for the site.</p> <p>A design brief has been produced for the site, by officers of the District Council, outlining the potential for other use - primarily residential.</p> <p>A key element of the development of this site is the provision of the link road. The indicative line of the Stourport Relief Road goes through this site and therefore any redevelopment will need to take this into consideration.</p> <p>(The site area provided here does not take into account the land identified for the relief road, which runs to approx 3.14ha. It may be that there are further areas for potential development once the line of the road has been finalised.)</p>	<p>To consider the re-allocation of the site for primarily residential use.</p> <p>The implementation of the relief road will need to be provided with any redevelopment proposals, due to the strategic significance of the road.</p> <p>The line of the road was retained through the Core Strategy process, indicating its importance for the District.</p>
	MIP and Morgan Planning Permission		<p>This collection of employment areas lies to the west of Stourport, along the Bewdley Road.</p> <p>This areas is split into two main sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morgan • Former MIP Site <p>In terms of the Morgan site, this is currently home to an important local employer. Part of the site</p>	<p>It is proposed that this site is split to reflect the different operations and aspirations for the various parcels of land.</p> <p>It is considered that the Morgan factory should retain its employment allocations with the</p>

Site No.	Site Name	Site Area	Comment	Recommendation
			<p>has been given planning permission for residential development on the basis that the money raised from the development for alternative uses will be put back into the existing employment area. Therefore, for this site, it is proposed that the employment designation remains for the factory with the designation for the area with planning permission for residential to be altered to reflect this change.</p> <p>With regards to the former MIP site, the land is now vacant and has been subject to development pressure for change of use for residential and a nursing home.</p> <p>One of the main issues for the future redevelopment of this site for residential uses is the impact of the adjoining Morgan site and ensuring that any noise issues are mitigated against.</p>	<p>site boundary amended to reflect the residential planning permission on the site.</p> <p>For the former MIP site, it is proposed to consider a mixed use allocation, incorporating residential use, a nursing home and potential office uses. (C3, C2, B1)</p>

Strategic Sites to allocate to meet the residual employment requirement:

As previously identified, after taking into account current completions, sites under construction and sites with planning permission; the residual requirement for employment land to be designated through the Local Development Framework stands at approximately 17 hectares.

In considering the allocation of sites, it is proposed that the following areas will provide for the residual target of employment / economic development over the plan period.

Site Number	Site Name	Site Area	Comment
	Former British Sugar Site	12 ha proposed for employment use	<p>As identified previously, the former British Sugar Site is subject to a master planning exercise, which seeks to provide a mixed-use destination, involving a significant amount of residential development.</p> <p>The site still remains, however, an important employment destination in its own right, given its location along the Stourport Road Employment Corridor.</p> <p>It is therefore proposed that this site will provide approximately 12 hectares of land for economic development purposes. Given the potential of this site, and the mixed use opportunity it provides, there may be scope to think about other employment generating uses combined with the more traditional B1, B2 and B8 use classes.</p> <p>Any proposals would need to confirm to the Core Strategy and National Policy in PPS4 but innovative ideas for generation of employment on this site will be discussed through the master planning process.</p>
	Former Romwire Site	5 hectares	<p>This is a cleared former factory site that is located on the southern end of the Stourport Road Employment Corridor. The site was formerly used by a wire manufacturing company but was demolished and the site cleared in 2010. The site is almost 5 hectares in size and provides a vacant parcel of land in an area which is dominated by businesses.</p> <p>Since the demolition of the factory, the site has been used for temporary storage and more recently been subject of a planning application for 2 hectares of the site to be occupied by a large national car dealership. If implemented this will see a large element of the site re-occupied, providing approximately 55 full time jobs and 39 part-time.</p>

Site Number	Site Name	Site Area	Comment
			It is considered that this site provides potential for new employment opportunities, is located in an important area for employment locally, and should be allocated for further economic development through the LDF process.
	Lea Castle	Unknown but could come forward as part of a mix of uses	The future of this site is currently being discussed with the various land owners. If it is subject to new development opportunities then this could potentially included employment generating uses and any policy should reflect this.

The above table provides the potential allocation of approx 17 hectares of employment/economic development land, with the potential for more land to be made available at Lea Castle, subject to further discussions on the future of this site.

These sites are therefore proposed to be allocated for economic development within the Site Allocations and Policies DPD. This should provide for a flexible approach to the requirement identified in the Core Strategy.

In addition to these main sites, it is anticipated that there will continue to be windfall sites coming forward on existing employment estates (which is what makes up most of the current sites that have planning permission). It is anticipated that this will continue to make an important overall impact on the amount of economic development that will occur in the District over the plan period.

Historically, small developments have made a large impact on the overall completion rate within the District. For example, between 1996 and 2010 (roughly the same time frame as the Core Strategy period), developments of under 1 hectare contributed a combined total of 10.84 hectares worth of employment completions. This type of windfall development is therefore considered to have a large affect on the total amount of development that occurs within the District.

Therefore, taking into account the proposed allocations, as identified above, and the potential for new windfalls to come forward through the plan period, it is considered that there will remain a flexible and responsive supply of land that is sufficient to meet the market requirements for economic development throughout the life of the plan.

Furthermore, it is considered that the land proposed through this assessment in terms of stock and supply provides a wide portfolio of sites that will help to meet different requirements of businesses throughout the District.